

REMARKS

This is responsive to the Office Action dated December 3, 2001, and the personal interview between the undersigned attorney and the Examiner on March 5, 2002. Applicant greatly appreciates the courtesy and cooperation of the Examiner during the interview and the examination of this application.

Section 112 Rejections

Claims 4-6, 7 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite and specific problems with those claims were identified in the Office Action. During the interview between the Examiner and the undersigned attorney, the Section 112 objections were discussed as well as language to overcome those objections. The claims have been amended herein to address the Section 112 problems as well as to clarify the claimed invention and use terminology that is consistent with the description of the invention in the specification as amended. As such, Applicant respectfully asserts that the Section 112 rejections have been overcome.

Specification

Applicant has amended the specification for consistency and clarity with respect to terminology and the identification of various features and components of the invention as reflected in the amended claims.

As part of the amendments to the specification, Applicant has introduced new reference numerals for specific features of the invention. Accordingly, enclosed herewith is a copy of FIG. 1 showing proposed changes in red ink. Applicant respectfully requests approval of these drawing changes.

Conclusion

As a result of the amendments to the claims and the remarks given herein, applicant respectfully asserts that the rejections of the claims have been overcome. Further, applicant asserts that claims 4-6, 10, 13-15, 17-19 and 33 as amended herein are allowable and request notification of same at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

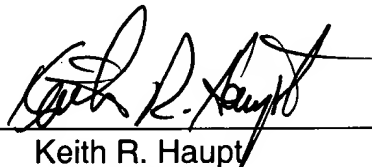
If the Examiner feels that any matter in this case requires further attention prior to issuing a Notice of Allowance, he is respectfully asked to telephone the undersigned attorney so that the matter may be promptly resolved.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page(s) is/are captioned "**Version with markings to show changes made.**"

Appl. No.09/394,660

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

The paragraph beginning at page 3, line 13, has been amended as follows:

In accordance with the present invention, the foregoing objects are met by the provision of a ticket dispenser [housing] which has a housing including a hinged [transparent] front cover forming the top and [one side wall] portions of the side walls of the housing, and another hinged rear cover forming the [opposite or front wall] complementary portions of the side walls of the housing, so that the [transparent] front cover can be lifted to give access to the ticket storage area, and the [front] rear cover can be rotated away to give access to the dispensing portion of the housing.

The first sentence of the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 6, has been amended as follows:

The unit 20 includes a pair of side [panels] walls 28 made of cast aluminum or other strong, secure material, with a curved portion 29 protruding out over the side-rail 24 of the check-out counter 22, or flush with the front of the counter depending on the installation.

The paragraph beginning at page 6, line 18, has been amended as follows:

The dispensing unit 20 [also] includes a [hinged transparent] housing with a front cover 34 (see FIG. 2) which is hinged to the housing [structure] at a front hinge 46 so as to fold to the left and away from the interior of the dispenser housing to give access to the interior for replenishing tickets, service, etc.

The paragraph beginning at page 6, line 22, has been amended as follows:

The housing of the unit 20 also includes hinged [front wall structure] rear cover 30 which has a pair of side panels each having a forward edge 43 and a sloping edge 45. The cover [34] 30 is hinged to the housing [structure] at a rear hinge 40.

The first paragraph beginning at page 7 has been amended as follows:

The [end plates] side walls 28 have an angular reinforcing rib 32 along a portion of the rear edge of the [plate] front cover 34. The edges 45 and 43 of the [front] rear cover 30 abut against the ribs 32 when the [cover] covers 30, 34 [is] are closed.

The paragraph beginning at page 7, line 4, has been amended as follows:

When the cover 34 is closed it is seated against a ledge 48 formed around the [inner] periphery of each of the [end plates] side walls 28.

The first sentence of the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 20, has been amended as follows:

As it is shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the top [34] portion 34a of the front cover 34 of the housing is flat.

The paragraph beginning at page 8, line 1, has been amended as follows:

Preferably, the cover 30 can be locked in place. Preferably, an edge of the cover 30 overlies the [front] edge of the cover 34 so as to lock the housing and prevent unauthorized access.

The paragraph beginning at page 8, line 4, has been amended as follows:

FIG. 3 is a front elevation view of the [front] rear cover 30 showing its rear wall 31 with a thin slot 56 extending across most of the width of the housing, through which tickets can be dispensed.

The paragraph beginning at page 8, line 7, has been amended as follows:

Referring again to FIG. 1, four strips of tickets 47, 49, 51 and 53 are stored in the housing. [The] A transparent portion 34b of the front cover 34 allows the customer to clearly see the tickets in the four channels of the dispenser mechanism, whether or not the top is used as a writing surface. --

In the Claims

5.(THRICE AMENDED) A ticket dispenser as in Claim 33 in which said drive module [further] comprises:

- at least one inlet opening for admitting plural parallel ticket strips therein;
- at least one outlet opening for issuing tickets from one of said strips;
- a drive motor coupled to a drive shaft;

a plurality of input drive rollers rotatably mounted on a common shaft and;
transmission means for selectively coupling said input drive rollers to said drive shaft for selectively feeding tickets in one of said strips through said module and out through said outlet opening.

6.(THRICE AMENDED) A ticket dispenser as in Claim 33 in which said [rear wall]
front cover includes a portion that is at least partially transparent, and said [rear wall]
front cover includes a curved portion.

10.(THRICE AMENDED) A ticket dispensing installation, comprising a ticket dispenser which has a bottom wall, a pair of side walls [extending upwardly from said bottom wall], a front [side wall] cover hinged adjacent [a bottom edge thereof] to said bottom wall [at a first side so as to swing outwardly and downwardly from said side walls], a rear cover hinged adjacent to said bottom wall [at a side opposite said first side said bottom wall], said bottom wall, said side walls, said front [side wall] cover and said rear cover defining an enclosed volume to contain a plurality of arrays of tickets in strips with individual tickets being delineated from one another by lines of weakness, a drive module in said ticket dispenser, said drive module being positioned adjacent said front [side wall] cover in a location to receive strips of tickets from said arrays, said drive module containing drive means for dispensing a predetermined number of tickets from a selected one of said arrays, a portion of said front cover being at least partially transparent to permit viewing of said ticket strips, a check-out counter having a first position at which the customer normally is located and a second position at which a store clerk normally is located, said ticket dispenser being mounted on said checkout counter with the front cover facing said first position at said check-out counter when purchases are being checked-out, and said [front side wall] rear cover facing said second position at said check-out counter[, a top of said cover being substantially flat to provide a convenient support surface on which to write].

15.(THRICE AMENDED) A ticket dispensing installation for use by customers at a checkout counter, the ticket dispensing installation comprising: a ticket dispenser for storing and dispensing a plurality of strips of tickets said ticket dispenser having a first [side wall] and a second [side wall] cover, a bottom structure secured to said [side walls] first and second covers, and a first portion of one of said covers being [an] at least partially transparent [cover], a second portion of one of said covers [said cover] having a substantially flat upper surface, said ticket dispenser containing a powered dispensing mechanism for selectively dispensing tickets from said strips, said ticket dispenser being mounted on said checkout counter with said flat upper surface accessible to customers while they are having their purchases checked out.

33.(AMENDED) A ticket dispenser for containing and dispensing a plurality of tickets in which each ticket is joined to an adjacent ticket by a line of weakness to form a strip of tickets, the ticket dispenser comprising:

a bottom support structure having a front edge and[,] a rear edge [and a pair of spaced side edges];

[a pair of side walls each of which extends upwardly from one of the side edges of the bottom support structure;]

a front [wall] cover pivotally connected proximate to the front edge of the bottom support structure by a front [wall] hinge;

a rear [wall] cover pivotally connected proximate to the rear edge of the bottom support structure by a rear [wall] hinge;

wherein the front and rear [walls] covers are pivotal about the front [wall] hinge and rear [wall] hinge, respectively, toward and away from a closed configuration;

wherein the front and[,] rear [and side walls] covers mate together in the closed configuration to define an enclosed volume in the ticket dispenser to hold the plurality of tickets; and

a powered drive module in the enclosed volume [proximate the front wall], the powered drive module receiving the tickets for dispensing from the ticket dispenser.